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Top to bottom: Timalarua, the canoe maker; Tiwi spears; mourning ceremony around graveposts.

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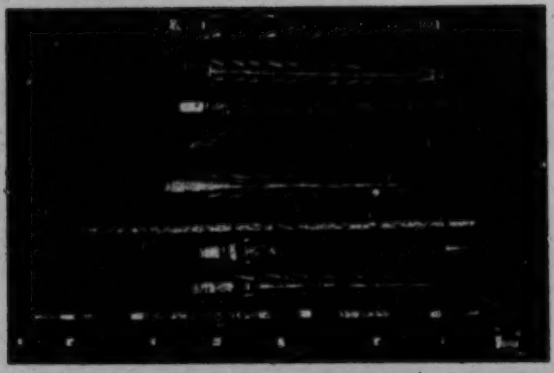

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1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

(Australian aborigines from the mainland) they were not Tiwi and hence not real people, or at least not human enough to share the islands with the chosen people who owned them.

Thus, the word "Tiwi" did not mean "people" in the sense of all human beings, but rather "we, the only people," or the chosen people who live on and own the islands, as distinct from any other alleged human beings who might show up from time to time on the beaches. This exclusion of outsiders from real "us-ness" and hence from real "human-ness" was continued when the Europeans began to arrive in the early nineteenth century, and certainly as late as 1930 the Tiwi continued to call and think of themselves as Tiwi, *the* people, and to use other words for all non-Tiwi, whether they were mainland aborigines, Malay fishermen, Japanese pearl-divers, French priests, or British officials, who penetrated into their exclusive little cosmos.

Their firm tradition that the twenty-five miles of ocean were adequate to isolate them from the mainland is confirmed by certain objective distributional evidence. Several characteristic features of mainland native technology were absent on Melville and Bathurst Islands, notably the spear thrower and the curved (or return) boomerang. To anthropologists, the idea of an Australian tribe lacking spear throwers and curved boomerangs is almost a contradiction in terms, and the only feasible explanation is isolation and hence failure of these mainland traits to diffuse to the islands.[1]

That no culture stands absolutely still in its technology no matter how isolated it may be is suggested by the fact that the Tiwi, while lacking the spear thrower and curved boomerang of the mainland, elaborated their wooden spears to a complexity of design and a degree of decoration unknown on the mainland, and also developed a much greater assortment of straight throwing sticks, made of hardwood, than any mainland tribe. Moreover, their carved and elaborately painted grave posts are unique among Australian tribes, and point up both the Tiwi isolation from the mainland and the favorable food situation which permitted the leisure time necessary to manufacture the elaborate posts as well as the elaborate ceremonial spears. In the nontechnological aspects of their culture we find in many respects the same absence of mainland traits and the same elaboration of traits that were distinctively or even uniquely Tiwi. Male initiation ceremonies on the mainland focus upon circumcision or subincision or both; neither custom was practiced by the Tiwi, who instead included in their initiation ritual the forcible plucking out of the pubic hair of the novice. The degree of plural marriages achieved under their marriage rules was far greater than anything reported for the mainland; the absolute prohibition of any female, regardless of age, being without a husband was unknown elsewhere in Australia; certain features of the kinship system fail to conform to any of the mainland norms, and so on. Wherever we look in their culture we get the strong impression of an Aus-

[1] A toy spear thrower, played with by children, was in use, but this may be the result of post-white contact. Its native name—*pani*—seems most un-Tiwi, and a likely guess is that it was introduced by Cooper's mainlanders, being accepted as a toy for children but scorned as childish by the adult men.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

quently, on the banks of some creek or river in Tiklauila territory, a party wanting to cross would scout around and find a canoe hidden in the weeds. Everybody would use it to cross, and the question "Whose canoe is it?" would elicit the reply, "Oh, it's always there and everybody uses it who wishes to cross." But if the question were "Who made it in the first place and put it there?" the answer would be, "Probably Timalarua. He likes making canoes; he makes them all the time." He also liked making spears and posts, though he was not as generous with them as Tu'untalumi. When one of his posts appeared at a funeral, people would point it out admiringly saying, "Timalarua made that one" and the speaker would trace the lines and designs on it with his finger, using much the same gestures as an art critic in a modern gallery. When a post by Tu'untalumi was identified and admired, however, the admiration was for Tu'untalumi the generous person rather than Tu'untalumi the artist. One was a wonderful craftsman, the other was a wonderful man. But acclaim given to the song and dance performances of the two men was just the reverse: the dances of Timalarua were adequate but not outstanding, those of Tu'untalumi were in a class by themselves.

Comparison of the activities of these two old men illustrates the impossibility of drawing any line, in the simpler cultures at least, between artistic production and technological production. The canoes and the posts manufactured by Timalarua and the posts manufactured and the new dances created by Tu'untalumi were all, so to speak, in the same category, as far as the Tiwi were concerned. The distinction we might make between the canoes as "useful" products and the posts and dances as ceremonial or artistic products never occurred to them. All were objects or products which only successful old men had the required skill and leisure to make. The fact that one old man liked to make canoes and leave them around for other people to use, and another old man liked to compose dances and perform his compositions widely for other people to enjoy, to them merely indicated individual taste and choice; it did not make the first a craftsman and the second an artist. This point has been overlooked in most of the theorizing about primitive art; perhaps a necessary first step in the development of primitive artists is for a society to be able to provide a few men with enough leisure time to be able to cultivate what might perhaps best be called hobbies, since a hobby can equally well be something "useful" to society, like canoe making, or something personally satisfying, like dancing or decorating graveposts.

The huge, heavy, painted spears made by these old Tiwi men were mainly used only for display, and even the oldest men were positive that this had always been the tradition. In fact, they seemed a little shocked at the implication that such beautiful and valuable objects could ever have been used for such mundane purposes as hunting or warfare. The cutting and painting of such spears took time and skill—more time than a gravepost—and no important man went to the smallest gathering without bearing on his shoulder at least half a dozen of these symbols of his importance. If on his way through the bush he sighted a kangaroo, he dropped his painted spears and stalked the animal with an ordinary spear, or more probably left it to the young men in the party who carried only ordinary ones.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[6] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gumcured sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[6] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

relatives, soon caught up with them. Several cases of such elopements occurred during the period of fieldwork, including the case of one young couple (Peanut and Jumbo's wife) who made repeated attempts to elope over a period of several years. But despite the relaxation of standards that white contact had brought, as long as they remained on the islands these violators of the system were soon forced back into conformity by outraged public opinion and its punitive sanctions. Unless he fled to the mainland with his girl, the young bachelor who stole an old man's young wife had to restore her sooner or later to her rightful husband. Under pre-white conditions they could not flee to the mainland; if they tried, they both probably drowned on the way or at least were never heard of again.

Thus the isolation of the Tiwi made the rule of the gerontocracy much more absolute, and the enforcement of it much more effective than was possible for any of the mainland tribes where violators of the rules could skip across the border. Tiwi bachelors had to be satisfied, by and large, with casual and temporary liaisons and even in these, because of the constant suspicion of the old husbands and the constant spying and scandalmongering of the old wives, they had to be prepared to be often caught and, when caught, to be punished. Thus we come to another of the main emphases in Tiwi culture—the enormous frequency of disputes, fights, duels, and war parties arising directly or indirectly out of cases of seduction. If we may call this area of life the legal area, then over 90 percent of legal affairs were matters in which women were in some way involved.

THE DUEL The Tiwi formula for handling seduction was very straightforward and clear-cut in its formal outline. Since senior men had young wives and young men had not, seduction was necessarily viewed as an offense by a young man against a senior man. Hence the charge was always laid by the senior and the younger man was always the defendant.[1] At night in camp the accuser hurled his charges at the offender. We described earlier the alternatives available at this stage to both parties. Two of those alternatives were for the old man to press the matter to a public "trial," either the next day, if the camp was already a large one, or else on the next occasion when both men were present in a big gathering.

The basic shape of all Tiwi trials was standardized in the form that we have been calling the duel. Everybody present—men, women, children, and dogs—formed a rough circle in an open space, sitting or standing according to their degree of excitement at the moment. At one end stood the accuser, the old man, covered from head to foot in white paint, with his ceremonial spears in one hand and a bundle of the more useful hunting spears in the

[1] Under pre-white conditions this had to be so. After the arrival of the Catholic missionaries, some young men through Mission manipulation got a young wife at an age that would have been impossible earlier. This resulted in an occasional case around the Mission where a *young* husband charged a *man* older than himself with seducing his wife. The resulting duel, with an older man as defendant, was regarded by the Tiwi as both embarrassing and ludicrous, perhaps analogous to the average American's attitude toward female professional wrestlers. (See Hart 1954 for a case of this sort, the duel of Bob v. Louis.)

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

other. At the opposite end stood the defendant, with little or no paint on him, perhaps holding a hunting spear or two in his hand (a sign of insolence), perhaps holding only throwing sticks (less defiant, since the stick was an inferior weapon more appropriate to young men), or perhaps entirely weaponless (a sign of proper humility and the deference to his seniors that all bachelors ought to show in such situations). The accuser, with many gestures, particularly with much stamping of the feet and chewing of the beard, told the young man in detail precisely what he and all right-minded members of the community thought of him. This angry, loud harangue went into minute detail, not only about the actual offense, but the whole life career of the defendant, and paid particular attention to occasions in the past when the old man even remotely, or some of his relatives, even more remotely, had performed kindnesses toward either the young man or some of his relatives. It is difficult to summarize briefly one of these harangues, but the general formula, subject to much variation by each individual accuser, appeared to be the building up of as much contrast as possible between the criminal or antisocial character of the young man's actions and the fact that he was a member of a network of interpersonal relationships in which mutual aid and reciprocal obligations were essential. The Tiwi orators, of course, did not put the matter in such abstract terms. They listed the long catalogue of people who had done things for the young man since his birth, and for his ancestors and relatives, until the catalogue took in practically the whole tribe—past, present, and future. And what had he done to repay his obligations to all these people? "Why, the miserable, ungrateful wretch spends his time hanging around my camp, etc., etc. And not only my camp, but last year it was widely believed that he was indulging in similar actions around the camp of my esteemed fellow-elder, So and So." We do not think that we are overintellectualizing the content of these harangues if we say that they involved the old man's reminding the young man of his debt to society, and his attempting to convey the idea that social life needed mutual aid and trust between all its members.

After twenty minutes or so of this sociological abuse and blame pinning, the old man threw aside his ceremonial spears and began to throw his hunting spears at the defendant. This active phase of the duel conformed to a stereotyped pattern which in some respects resembled baseball. The old man stood about ten feet farther away from the young man than the pitcher stands from the plate. The young man had to avoid being hit by the spears. To do this he was permitted to jump from side to side or into the air, or to duck, but he was expected always to land on approximately the same spot as he had been standing on when the first spear was thrown. Thus there was no marked strike zone, but an implied one. If the accused jumped well away from the strike zone, he was jeered by the crowd. If the old man was wild, he was jeered too, but more respectfully. Under such rules a modern baseball hitter, having no bat in his hand to worry about, would almost never be hit by a pitched ball, and the Tiwi young men were similarly never likely to be hit by an old man's spears. The main danger was the spear that pitched in the dirt: Although clearly outside the strike zone and hence an indication that the old man was

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
O120 Tiwi O120

southern coast of Bathurst Island. In 1885, the Australian government tried to erect channel markers on the southern shore of Melville Island, whereupon the Tiwi immediately "salvaged" both cloth and iron from them. During June and July of the same year the ship *Jane Anderson* was stranded on the shoals of East Melville and then Bathurst Island. Also in 1886, two Malay proas were wrecked on the north coast of Melville Island. That year was a great one for looting.

Occasionally visitors came ashore on the islands. The Stokes' survey party landed in the late 1830's, but saw no natives. A government party crossed Melville Island in 1887; the Tiwi speared its leader. In 1895, a government tourist party went to look over the ruins of old Fort Dundas; they kept their eyes open and no one was injured. In 1897, Joe Cooper, a buffalo shooter, tried to make a living from the Melville Island buffalo; he was speared and retreated to Darwin.

Tiwi treatment of outsiders prior to 1900 had been to rob them, spear them, kill them. This is not, however, the picture painted by modern Tiwi when talking of their past. They claim that their ancestors greeted each new group of strangers with the cry: *"Pongki! Pongki!"* (meaning, "Peace! Peace!"). But then it should be noted that before 1900 many a Tiwi peacemaker carried a spear between his toes. Yet under these circumstances the Tiwi world view did alter. First there were those changes which came from an attempt to understand the new objects which were suddenly thrust into the Tiwi world: the trade knives and axes given by Dutch navigators, the matchlock guns used by the Malays and probably the Portuguese, the rice given to Tiwi by the surveyors under P. P. King, the Indonesian water buffalo introduced by the British at their short-lived settlement, the coconut palms the English left behind them, the cups and plates from shipwrecks in the 1880's, and the flour tossed overboard to lighten foundering vessels. The Tiwi cherished iron knives and axes, readily recognizing their greater efficiency. The Tiwi begged for them; they stole them; and, when a spar washed ashore bound round with iron bands, the natives burned away the wood and took the iron away to grind into axes. The matchlock gun, and even the later flintlock, could be coped with; when one saw the flash, one ducked flat, just in case the weapon worked, and then rushed in to impale the stranger with a spear. Rice was useless; it looked like the larvae of the termite, which was not good for anything anyway. Buffalo were to be killed; they kept wallowing in the best waterholes. Coconut palms were a great disappointment; they were bigger than the local cabbage palm, but when cut down, did not have the same succulent interior. Plates were too much bother to carry around, but cups were worth saving for a while. Flour could be used for white paint, but it was not as good as the best white pigment near at hand.

Other modifications took place in Tiwi life before 1900 as a result of action by outsiders. Probably the greatest of these alterations came as a result of slave raiding, or "black birding" as it is called in the South Seas. The Tiwi always kept their young women hidden from strangers, even if they were just visitors from other bands. The old men rarely left camp. Therefore, it was the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

773 [372] Puzzled over this new phenomenon, *Jurumu* placed the smouldering wood-dust into the pith of a dead pandanus palm and blew upon it. To the surprise of both men the speck became larger and larger, finally bursting into a flame. This frightened the men so badly that they rushed to *Purukupali* and asked him to destroy the strange thing they had made. But when *Purukupali* saw the blazing wood and felt its heat he realized that *Jurumu* and *Mudati* had inadvertently discovered something that would give the aborigines not only light to dispel the darkness, but heat to cook their food and to keep them warm.[16]

Calling his sister, *Wuriupranala*, he gave her a torch of bark lit from the blazing log and told her that it was her duty to keep it alight always. *Tjapara*, [821] who later became the moon, was given a smaller torch.

With the coming of light and heat, the descendants of *Mudungkala* spread over the island, hunting and camping in places which, at the close of the creation period, became their totemic country.

About that time, two men, *Puruti* and *Jirakati*, were spearing fish in Tiaupu, a freshwater swamp at Piper Head, near the northern entrance to Apsley Straits, when they noticed, by the movements of the stems of the water-lilies, some large creature moving about under the water.

Not knowing it was his mother, *Tipuru-undunga*, *Puruti* speared her in the [823] neck. Screaming with pain and urinating in her fright, *Tipuru-undunga* rushed into the sea, which in those days was fresh water, polluting it so much with her blood and urine that it became as salt as the sea of today.

The wounded *Tipuru-undunga* changed herself into the tall, stately bird, [825] the jabiru (*Xenorhynchus asiaticus*) which now lives on the edge of the fresh-water lagoons; while the fishermen, *Puruti* and *Jirakati* became the sea-osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) and the graceful white-headed sea-eagle (*Haliaetus leucogaster*).[16]

During those early *palaneri* times, a man, *Jirakupai*, lived beside a fresh-water lagoon, *Jirininga*, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. He had married two sisters, *Kuraruna* and *Jaknia*.

Jirakupai was an expert in the making of both the large many-barbed, male [411] spears, *tunkaringa*, which have a row of barbs on one side (Pl. 32A), and the female spears, *tunkaguni*, with their double row of barbs (Pl. 32B). Both forms are now used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

[16] The aborigines distinguish between light (*milajuka*) from the sun or burning wood, and heat (*jitwani*) from glowing coals.

[16] The large hawk-like birds, *Jirakati*, the sea-eagle, *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite, appear as men in a number of the myths. In each one they transformed themselves from men into birds.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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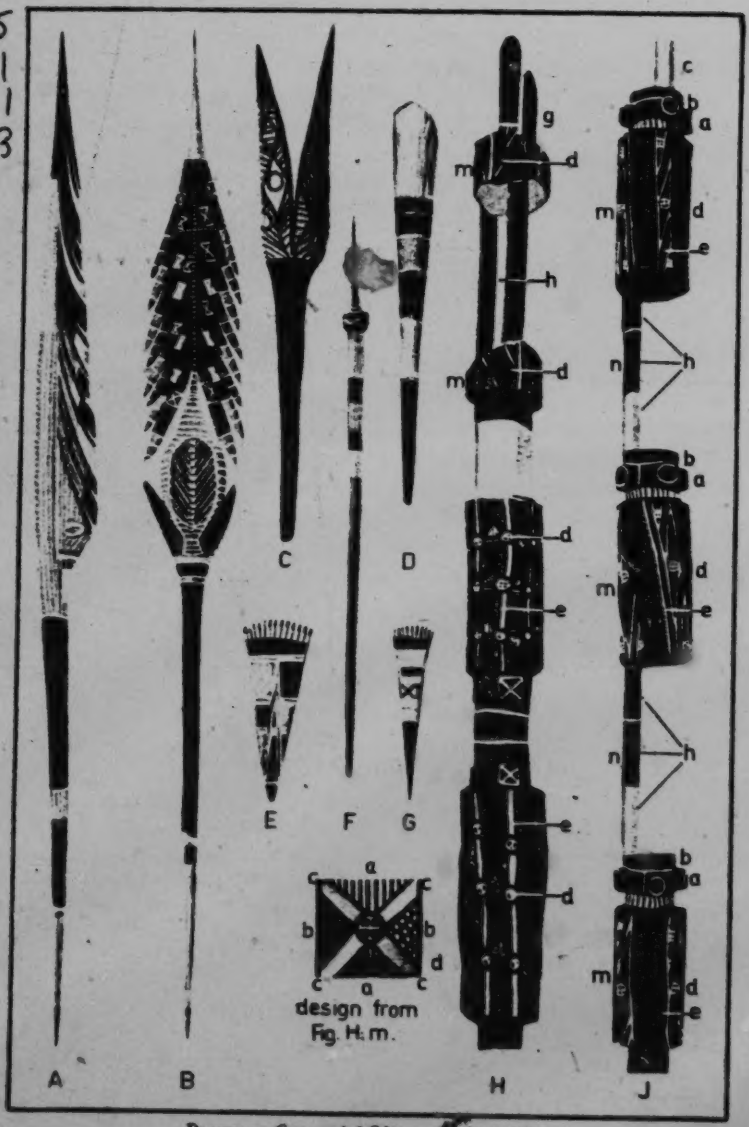

PLATE 32. *Ceremonial Objects and Burial Poles*
A, Male Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaringa; B, Female Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaguni; C, Forked Throwing Stick, Miluanta; D, Plain Throwing Stick, Muruguna; E, G, Tool, Porta, for Body Painting; F, Scratching Stick, Murubunga; H, J, Pukamuni Burial Poles.

[p. 88 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

765 778 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals.

[411] [531] Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known respectively as the male *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaringa*, and the female spear, *tunkaguni*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

[114] [322] [412] At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *miluanta*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *murugana*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamuni* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

[302] [413] Pl. 32E, G, are two interesting tools called *portas*, used for printing lines of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porta* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porta*. The *porta* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[86]

[515] [413] Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipaniati kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 765 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkitas*, are used by the Tiwi for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 51) invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 51F, G, H), and in association with the *pukamuni* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkitas*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamuni* rituals were about to start.

[301] [302] As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in white and donned his goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, his chest ornaments,

[86] The lines of dots on *Wurarkuti* (frontispiece) were made with a *porta*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 412 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe [177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of [415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the [285] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to 105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and 171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[46]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study, 123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[46] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

[114] [173]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

piece of the former fold are clasped between the fingers and thus used as a cup the part lying opposite to the fingers being held to the lips.

Honey Eating.

In my notes on the north-western tribes of the Northern Territory I have described[1] a honey-collecting implement and there, also, referred to somewhat similar observations made by Dr. Wilson[2] and Keppel.[3]

On Bathurst Island I observed still another modification. A young flower-stalk of the fan-palm (*Livistonia humilis*), when about 50 to 70 centimetres long, is cut just above the trunk of the palm and its bottom end chewed until all the fibres are separated and look like the hairs of a brush. The juice, being quite sweet, is swallowed. The brush end is then inserted into the nest of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*), whereby the honey gathers between the fibres. When saturated with honey, the brush end is passed back to the mouth and again sucked and chewed for a considerable time, after which it is once more returned to the honey for a fresh supply, and this is continued to repletion.

Tree Climbing.

Both male and female, young and old, are expert tree-climbers when in pursuit of game, honey of the wild bee, fruits, and seeds. As none of the trees on the islands grow to an abnormally large size, the butt is usually not too great in circumference to allow of the arms being thrown around it, so that the hands may obtain a firm hold on the side distant from the climber. Having obtained this hold while standing on the ground and facing the tree, the native jumps on to the butt, clutching it with the flat surfaces of his feet in a frog-like fashion. The knees in this position stand well outwards. The body hangs, suspended by the arms above and held against the tree by the legs below. The climber now raises his body; his hands quickly follow by a corresponding distance. Holding on with the latter he draws up his legs in a jumping manner once more to clutch the tree between the soles of his feet. This movement being repeated, he rapidly advances upwards.

Hunting and Fighting.

Throwing-sticks and clubs.—Several types of throwing-sticks and clubs are in use. They must be referred to under this general or collective heading, since it is hard to discriminate between the two implements and to say definitely where the throwing-stick ends and the club begins. They form an interesting group of Australian implements and weapons that allows of a satisfactory system of

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 26, Fig. 19.
[2] *Narrative Voyage Round the World*, 1836, p. 98.
[3] *A Visit to Indian Archipelago*, 1853, vol. 2, p. 168.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

classification on account of the regularity of the various types, not only as regards the actual cutting of the particular form, but also as regards the way in which they are decorated (*vide* Plate IX, Figs. 1, 2, 3, and 4).

Type 1.—The simplest type seen in use is a stick, 46 or 47 centimetres long, usually more or less curved, thin at the hand-end, gradually thickening upwards and swelling to a club-head at the distal end. The surface is longitudinally furrowed, the result of scraping. The stick is painted on special occasions in various colours, as follows: hand-end red or brown (25 cm.), thence successive circular bands of yellow (·5 cm.), white (1 cm.), red (·25 cm.), black (3 cm.), red (·25 cm.), yellow (1 cm.), white (·25 cm.), red (4 cm.), yellow (·5 cm.); club-head white (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 1).

Type 2.—The second type to be described is somewhat similar. It measures 60 centimetres in length and is usually straight. Whereas in the previous type the club-head is rounded off at its distal end, it ends with a blunt point in the case now before us. The club-head, too, is larger in proportion. The surface is scraped longitudinally and painted in alternate bands of red and white of different breadths. From the hand-end upwards the coloured bands are as follows: red (19 cm.), white (10 cm.), red (8 cm.), white (23 cm.) (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 3).

Type 3.—The third type is slender and thickens very gradually from the hand- to the club-end, whence a sharp spine projects for 2 centimetres. It is scraped longitudinally and painted in rather more elaborate fashion than the two foregoing types. The hand-end is red for a distance of about 30 centimetres; thence follow successively bands of yellow (1 cm.), white (6 cm.), red (1 cm.), black (4 cm.), yellow (1 cm.). The club-head is white with two longitudinal yellow bands at opposite extremes of a diameter, dividing it into two halves vertically. Within each of the white fields thus produced are two intersecting, undulating lines, one of red and one of yellow, running longitudinally and terminating in the spine at the top, which is red (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 2).

Type 4.—This type consists of a stick, circular in section, which increases slightly in diameter from the hand-end upwards, for a distance of 55 centimetres. The diameter at that distance is 3½ centimetres, but immediately beyond, the stick slopes abruptly to a thickness of only 1½ centimetres, whence it tapers to a long pointed end, about 20 centimetres long. The stick is painted in red, yellow, and white, as follows: the hand-end is red for 23 centimetres, thence follow bands of white (1 cm.), yellow (8 cm.), red (1 cm.), white (12 cm.), red (1 cm.), yellow (8 cm.), red (1 cm.). The extreme end of the stick and the long spine are white (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 4).

The two last-described types have, to my knowledge, not been observed in Australia before.

Spears.

In dealing with the spears used on Bathurst Island (and the same holds good for Melville Island), we are brought into contact with types that are unknown on

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

411 the mainland. In the first place no spears are manufactured for projecting by other method than simply by hand. No spear-throwers, so much in evidence [101] among all true Australian tribes, are in use on these islands. Yet light spears 411 were observed which really marked the beginning of the development of the arrow. 524 These were seen to be used by youths at play and during their sham fights. Light green sticks, a little over a metre in length and slightly more than a lead pencil's thickness, are cut and scraped to a simple point at one end. The opposite end, that is, the back- or hand-end, is next put to the mouth and split with the teeth along its fibres into several strips some 10 centimetres long. The split pieces are then bent outwards like the feathers of an arrow and the toy weapon is ready for use. It can be hurled by hand with astounding precision. The opponents evade the missiles by dodging and crouching and contorting their bodies in much the same clever manner as I have described[1] of the Larrekiya and Wogait tribes.

411 Strictly speaking, one type of spear prevails. It is made of a single piece of solid wood, straightened to a greater or less degree over a fire. It is barbed at the front end and tapers to a simple point behind. The extreme variations in length and, consequently, in weight also, of this spear attract the attention at first sight. It is nothing unusual to find spears measuring 450 centimetres in length and weighing 2,700 grammes, but at the same time the smaller specimens measure only 250 centimetres in length and weigh 370 grammes. When we consider that a fair average length of the Northern Territory spear is 300 centimetres and a good average weight 260 grammes, the maxima of the islanders' spears quoted seem very remarkable indeed. The more do these appeal to us since the largest species [136] of the indigenous fauna is but a fair-sized wallaby. Crocodiles are comparatively scarce, and the buffalo, introduced from Timor by Captain Barlow, first commandant of Fort Dundas, in 1826, is practically unknown on Bathurst Island. On Melville Island, where similar spears are in use, the buffalo is very plentiful, but it is a singular fact that the natives do not hunt this beast to any considerable extent.

The head of the spear has many barbs carved on one side and, occasionally, on two diametrically opposite sides. There are usually from ten to thirty barbs, which are directed backwards (*vide* Plate IX, Fig. 5 (Series)). Behind these there may or may not be from four to eight small serrations that stand out at right angles to the length of the shaft. In other cases, too, some six or more barbs are cut at the back part of the spear-head pointing the opposite way, that is, in the direction the spear is thrown. The spear heads have a long point resembling a cutting-blade or spike. The barbs are symmetrically carved with sharp edges and point. They are flattish lancet-shaped, with a central ridge on the outside, and project from the head to various degrees of prominence in different specimens. Many of the spears are longitudinally grooved with an adze, either for the whole of their length or along the head-end only. They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi., 1907, p. 33.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

They are occasionally coloured and decorated with ochre, some of the designs being very pleasing to the eye. Some spears, moreover, have human hair strings wound round the shaft, immediately below the head, for a distance of 10 centimetres or more, and this is kept in place with beeswax. 471 [531]

Canoes.

Elsewhere I have referred to the marked absence among the northern Australian tribes of anything but the most primitive crafts and such innovated forms as have resulted from the contact with the white and yellow races. They are, therefore, not to be considered as truly indigenous canoes. On Bathurst Island, however, conditions are different; due, perhaps, in the first place, to its insularity (as well as the numerous estuaries and rivers that cross the land), and, secondly, to the proximity of Melville Island, which is separated from it by only a narrow stretch of calm water known as Apsley Strait. The latter is barely a mile in width at its narrowest points. Numerous canoes are in use within this Strait, and occasionally, when wind and water are favourable, they venture a short distance out to sea. One type is principally in use, namely, a large bark-canoe measuring about 560 centimetres in length (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). It is made of a single sheet of bark, usually from suitable, straight, clear trunks of the woollybutt (*Eucalyptus miniata*) or the stringy-bark (*E. tetradonta*) (*vide* Plate XII, Fig. 1). It is cut from the tree by chopping transversely at the respective distances from the ground, then slitting it once vertically for the whole length and removing it by forcing the edge of the instrument under the bark and finally levering it off with pointed saplings. The outer side of this oblong piece of bark, which is rough, will become the inside surface of the canoe. At a distance of from 65 to 70 centimetres from either end, transverse cuts are made on the inside to a depth of half the thickness of the bark, and such thickness is removed from the whole of the surface lying away from the centre at either incision. Each end is thus reduced by half its original strength and material thereby becoming more pliable. The cutting is done with the sharp edge of a bivalve shell, usually a *Cyrena*. The subtilized ends of the sheet may, or may not, be held over a glowing fire to render them more pliant still. The sheet is folded lengthwise along its middle, and one or both ends kept together by vertical stakes, stuck in the ground and tied together at the top. The bottom corner of the fold is cut away in a very gentle upward slope. The two pieces of the fold are next held firmly together and cut in a more decisive upward direction from a point some 30 to 50 centimetres from the bottom edge end. The two freshly cut edges are neatly sewn with close, overcast stitches, and the same is done along the top horizontal edge for a distance of some 15 or 20 centimetres from the end. From the intervening space between the sewn parts at the top and bottom, an angular or curved segment is cut out in imitation of a fish-tail and its edges laced together in a like manner (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 1 and 2). The thread used for these "run on" stitches is in the form of strips from the split sheets of the

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5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on The

The first plate reproduced contains a group composed of five imprints of the left hand of a native (Plate XIX, Fig. 1). The fingers are wide apart; the wrists of the two lowest hands seem very narrow in proportion, but that is due to the fact that they did not lie in close contact with the surface when the pigment was squirted against it.

In the lower corner on the right of the reproduction stands a single-masted sailing craft, intended to represent a small European pearling or fishing-boat. The former class of boats have long been in the habit of passing through Apsley Strait on account of the shelter afforded and the chances of procuring fresh water close to the shores of either island.

Plate XIX, Fig. 2, is the lower continuation of the proceeding. The sailing craft just described is noticed on the right. Below it is the picture of a frog. Special features of this design are firstly the two circular lateral prominences on the head representing the large eyes and, secondly, the inaccuracy in regard to the number of toes. The smear on the left hind leg, resembling a caudal appendage, is accidental.

The fourth design (Plate XX) is that of a double-masted pearling-lugger[1] in full sail. The proportion and neatness of execution of these designs of sailing crafts are excellent indeed. The hulk and sails of the latter figure are drawn in white pipe-clay and its masts in red ochre.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate VII.

Figs. 1 and 3. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with fur strings and cockatoo feathers. ⅓ natural size.

Figs. 2 and 4. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with pointed sticks. ⅓ natural size.

Plate VIII.

Figs. 1 and 2. Water-carriers, made of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). ⅓ natural size.

Figs. 3, 4, 5 and 6. Food-carriers, made of bark; Figs. 5 and 6 with ochre drawings. ⅓ natural size.

Plate IX.

Figs. 1, 2, 3 and 4. Throwing-sticks and clubs. ⅓ natural size.

Fig. 5. A collection of spears from Bathurst Island. $\frac{1}{12}$ natural size.

by filling the mouth with charcoal powder if the device is to be black, if red with red ochre powder, damping the wall where the mark is to be left, and placing the palm of the hand against it, with fingers stretched out; the charcoal or ochre powder is then blown against the back of the hand; when it is withdrawn, it leaves the space occupied by the hand and fingers clean while the surrounding portions of the wall are all black or red, as the case may be." (Central Australian Natives.)

[1] *Vide* figure in *Report Government Geologist and Staff*, 1905, Adelaide, By authority, p. 14.

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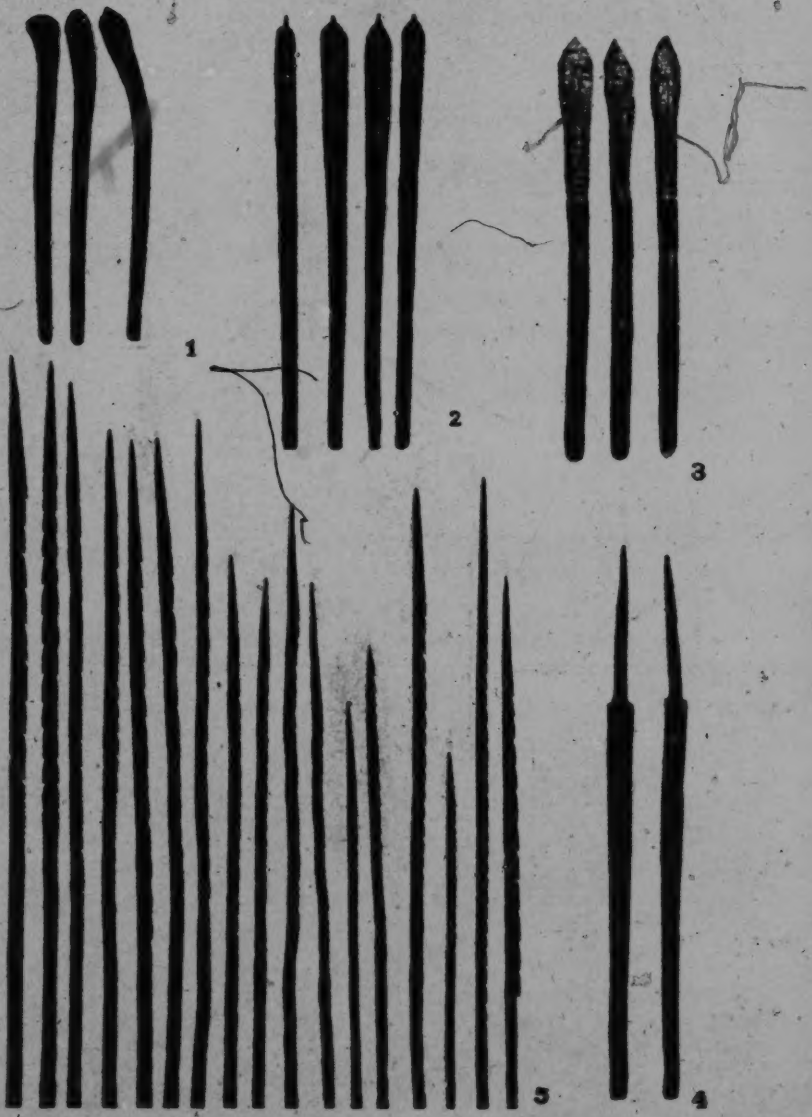

NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 3]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE P. 321 - ANALYST]

8:Fry D-5 (1813) 1950 OI20 Tiwi OI20

881 while a small trestle had been built of three upright sticks about 2 ft. 6 in. high in the [343] form of an isosceles triangle, with the apex to the west. Cross sticks were laid across the top of this and the sticks covered with grass. Three old men then took Cooper to a point about twenty yards east of the trestle and faced towards it, two on his right, one on his left. They each held a [411] flat bladed club, *irruulla*, in the left hand horizontally above the head and beat the [533] point of it with a light round club with a pointed end, *merkunga*. Cooper held three *merkunga* in the crook of his left arm, one being taken and used by one of the old men. The old men advanced towards the trestle, chanting and beating their clubs in the way described. Cooper was slightly behind them. Young men followed the group. Cooper stood before the trestle as at an altar while the old men chanted for about five minutes. Water was called for, and brought by a woman and given to a visitor from the Mugula tribe. He then poured the water over Cooper's head. Cooper rubbed his belly with his *merkunga*. The visitor then pulled the hair string free from one end of the wooden collar, *aladini*, while Cooper made very wry faces. The collar was removed and the ceremony ended. I was [439] presented with Cooper's *aladini* and *merkunga* in return for gifts, and I was cheerfully escorted back to the beach where the lugger was waiting for me.

H. K. FRY,
D.S.O., B.Sc., M.D.

[p. 168 A]

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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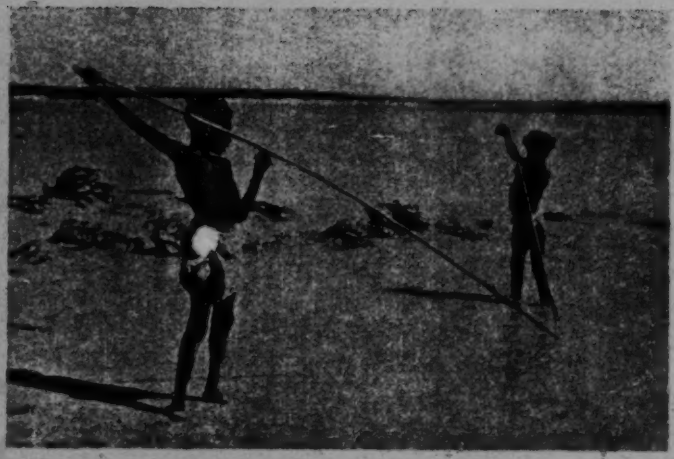

Fig. 9. Two young hunters practicing with fish-spears

123 the impenetrable jungle, which were attributed to the *Ningawi*, the
[776] weird and mysterious "little people" of the mangrove. Rounding a curve in the river, we surprised a flock of whistle ducks sitting on an exposed mudbank. Young Billy tried to shoot one for supper but missed, and soon they were well out of range. On a rare piece of solid ground we saw the long tail and massive hips of a startled
[136] wallaby as he hopped to safety. However, a successful throw of the fish-spear brought us a large barramundi, and the .22 rifle provided both a possum and a fruit bat, or flying fox, for supper.

All of a sudden the mangroves disappeared and our view was no longer restricted to the river bank; rather we gazed through
[137] thick, gnarled white paperbarks on the water's edge to wide expanses of marshy grasslands. A few flocks of black and white geese, which had returned to the swamps early in the evening, were startled by the sound of the motor and rose honking in fright.

About five, we reached Minianapi, a landing place about fifteen yards wide, where solid ground reached the river bank. We were

123 sional patch of grass, which the rushing fire had missed, there was not a living green plant below the four-foot line. Burning the country is an annual occurrence and many are the laws governing 221 who may burn and who may subsequently hunt in the newly cleared 224 land. Because the fires are set each year, there is no accumulation of dry tinder to feed the fire and allow it to rage uncontrollably. Only the grass and a few fallen logs catch and these will burn rapidly and fiercely, but for a very short period. Any gap in the vegetation will stop the fire and the heavy dew, falling in the evening, will also put out the flames, leaving perhaps only isolated, smouldering logs to burn through the night. Until the first shoots of new grass push [421] their way through the charred ground, the individual hunter who set the fire has exclusive rights to the area he set alight. Of course, no one except those who belong to that country may burn without [671] permission of the owners. As far as possible, these laws are still upheld.

123 We soon came to a branch in the path and Albert indicated that we two girls should continue straight ahead; he would stop behind. In front of us stretched the fresh-water swamp. Out of the almost inky but clear water rose the gnarled paperbark trees, their roots so intertwined they almost formed a floor, albeit a most slippery and irregular one, over the rotten vegetation in the bottom of the swamp. I picked a particularly large rooted tree for my bath [515] tub, and a short distance away Agnes did the same. If one was careful not to disturb the fine deposit on the bottom but managed to stay on top of the slippery roots, the clear cool water was as sweet and soft as one could wish for. We stayed for about an hour, washing ourselves and our clothes, but finally an impatient call from Albert put an end to this pleasure. Albert had been hunting for a possum, but in this area so close to the camp, they had already been depleted.

123 Instead of returning to camp, Albert decided that now was as good a time as any to cut his *milingani*, the sticks with which they ● 411 kill the geese. After another mile or so into the bush, we came to a 322 grove of stout bushes of a kind I had not seen before. They had [223] long, straight branches of about a half-inch diameter. These Albert

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

Fig. 13. Gathering water-lilies in a fresh-water swamp

cut and after he had collected about thirty he selected a nice, smooth ledge of rock in the shade to work further on the sticks. First he stripped the bark, then measuring them against his arm he cut them so that each stick was as long as the distance from his fingertips to his elbow. All this he did with his knife, holding it by the tip of its long blade so that the handle would add its weight to each blow. He carefully smoothed off the two ends so there were no loose splinters. We each took a bundle of these sticks, tied them with strips of pandanus, and returned to the camp. Here they were laid in the water close to the bank and weighted down with a rock. This would make them good and heavy, it was explained.

During the afternoon, the two men worked on the permanent house which Bill Grimster had ordered. Big Jack had spent the morning cutting posts and had brought in about half a dozen. By late afternoon, when the others returned, they had been set upright in holes dug to individual measure so that they stood firm without bracing.

Once everyone had returned, a fire was built. The men collected their individual bundles of *milingani* and placed the ends of the dripping sticks in the flames. They squatted over the sticks and individually started a chant during which they cupped their hands in the smoke and carrying it to their bodies, slapped their necks, then their arms. "Knar. Knar Gerra doo (slap), Gerra doo (slap)." The chant was nothing more than the imitation of the cries of the geese and the whir of the sticks. They explained that to bring the geese down they had to hit it directly on the neck or wings. "Why

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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Fig. 14. "Cooking *milingani*"

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do you cook the sticks?" I asked. "To make them dry so they won't slip in our hands," they replied.

Once the sticks were all well charred on the ends the men took them down to the canoe. For once, I used my status of ethnographer and overruled my role of a woman, and accompanied the men on what was properly men's business. The presence of women or children might bring bad luck. Whether the explanation was simply that women and children are considered to be lacking in the amount of silence or immobility required, or whether the reason was more subtle, I never found out. "This properly men's business," was the only explanation.

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We took the canoe a quarter of a mile up stream, where we

797 The couples marry young without any thought for the future. They just marry as, and when, they feel inclined, and the mission
582 fathers provide the new home. Under the palms beside the
342 Strait are many of the queer little iron humpies provided, just a roof, as it were, sloping on each side from the ridge-pole to the ground. The whole can be picked up and moved to a fresh position when fleas become too numerous and the surroundings otherwise unpleasant. These humpies scarcely seem attractive to white folk, but the islanders like them, and they are at least a great improvement on the dog-kennels of old iron that the blacks persist in erecting for themselves on the beach at Darwin.

797 Proper houses are provided in the Kahlin compound there, but
342 the blacks despise them; and, although the miserable humpies on the beach are demolished from time to time by the authorities, they are all up again by next evening. The good fathers know what the islanders prefer, and they have given the married couples the kind of accommodation in which they feel most happy. The humpies may be hot and stuffy, but they are dry inside when it rains.

142 The island blacks, in many respects, differ considerably from
144 the tribes of the mainland. They are excessively hirsute, and, on attaining maturity, the men grow long beards, many being of truly patriarchal proportions. The upper lip is kept bare, which practice seems to emphasize the magnificence of the beard. Shocks of hair, sometimes standing six inches high, add to a wildly impressive appearance. They are tall and muscular, and, as they stride along, they seem the very acme of physical development, a living advertisement for the natural, open-air existence.

302 The hairs, by the way, are plucked from the upper lip one by one, and this painful proceeding is undertaken in the calmest manner, certainly with less fuss and facial distortion than the average white man makes during his morning shave.

171 The use of the woomera for throwing spears, and of the
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[p. 15(A)]

boomerang, is unknown to the islanders. Ceremonial customs, language, origin, and burial rites all differ from those of the mainland tribes, and constitute an interesting study for anthropologists. They are the only aborigines who erect memorials on the graves of the departed, and, in the forest beside the aerodrome, you may see a typical grave surrounded with queerly-carved ironwood totem-poles. The poles, some eight feet in height, are carved in varying patterns. They had been painted in highly decorative designs with red, yellow, and white ochre, with black bands of charcoal to give sharp and artistic contrast. Each kindred totem to that of the deceased must place a pole at the grave. Failure to erect a pole is supposed to signify that no sorrow is felt for the death, and punishment will follow. Something unpleasant always *does* happen to those who neglect this duty.

AFTER these necessary digressions, let us return to my visit to the mission station. We followed the fathers over the stile, up an avenue of palms, and on through the garden, where pineapples and bananas grow, and there are rows of immense and beautifully shady mango-trees. Sturdy, fuzzy-headed aborigines strode in front (one of them had just come in with a couple of kangaroos for the larder), and the boys trooped along behind us. The quarters of the fathers are very much those of bachelors, perfectly bare, with guns in the corners and a few native weapons and curios hanging on the walls.

Here two lubras brought us morning tea, and here I learnt much of the foregoing matters. The fathers themselves are entertaining men of the world, and their white cricket shirts and khaki slacks gave no indication of their calling. The boys gathered at the foot of the steps leading up to the quarters, and every now and then black-bearded Father McGrath would banter them in their own language. Like all the native peoples

[p. 15 (B)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 O120 Tiwi O120

726 One man will then take a step or two forward, hold up a hand, and stamp vigorously, and all the warriors of his side will copy his actions. "Let 'em all come!" is the attitude adopted. If the enemy does not start hostilities at once, they throw their spears down and jump about like wallabies to show their contempt for the sluggard's marksmanship. They are, however, careful not to get too far away from their own weapons, on which they pounce immediately the first spear is hurled by their opponents. The air is soon thick with flying spears and war-clubs, and the exchange goes on until some unlucky warrior is really hurt, when the engagement ceases.

727 BOTH sides gather round, howling their dismay, until repairs [781] to the injured have been effected. A red-dyed ball of goose-down, which is hung from the neck by a string woven of human hair, is held before the mouth as a charm to divert the missiles, but the warriors owe their immunity from death or serious injury to their own remarkable eyesight and to the dexterity with which they evade, or turn to one side, the hurtling weapons of the enemy. The war-clubs used by the islanders are far more 411 difficult to dodge than the spears, which come straight at you.

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A BATHURST ISLANDER BRANDISHES HIS CLUB.

The war-club is merely a short, bent stick with a knob at one end; but, running in the air like a boomerang, it can be thrown for amazing distances by the islanders, considerably over a hundred yards, and not far off two hundred. This weapon is not thrown straight at an opponent, but at a stone, or a tuft of

[P. 17(A)]

13:Barclay J-3 (ca. 1939)1939 O120 Tiwi O120

411 grass, in the foreground, so that the whirling club slithers on in an unforeseen and most unpleasant manner. It may rise as high as a man's head, or it may strike him on the shins.

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NATIVE "HOUSES" UNDER THE COCO-NUT PALMS AT BATHURST ISLAND MISSION.

726 Sometimes, as in the days of chivalry when English and French knights rode out before the main battle, eight men will advance to fight eight men of the other side, one pair at a time, each warrior throwing his spears and clubs in turn. [198] Sentries are then posted to one side, before and behind the combatants. As a warrior with a stock of pidgin English put it, "That feller, him look out front side. That feller, him look out back side."

At times warriors arrive by canoe to fight a duel on the beach close to the mission station. These are frequently more serious combats, and then men who are camped under the palms chase the duellists off; but these always land later farther down, and fight it out in the long run. Just before my visit, there had been fought the only naval battle in the history of the islands. The encounter took place in the mouth of Apsley Strait to the accompaniment of excited yells as canoes overturned when warriors stopped unwarily in dodging the flying spears. Nobody

[p. 17(B)]